



Gaelscoil na Cruaiche

(Bunaithe: 1995. Príomhoide: Mairéad Ní Ruáin)

Cathair na Mart, Contae Mhaigheo

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Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Introduction

The R.S.E. school policy for Gaelscoil na Cruaiche has been developed in partnership with the parents, the Principal Mairéad Ní Ruáin, the teaching staff and core values and ethos of the school.

Mission statement

This policy reflects the overall ethos of our school which states:

“The school creates a spirit in which children recognise their own worth, where self esteem and responsibility are cultivated as well as fair play and respect for all, where high standards are expected, recognised and commended, where the uniqueness of the child is recognised, where conflicts are handled sensibly and maturely, where creativity and progress are stimulated, where social, civil and moral virtues are cultivated and where care for the good of every member of the school community is given”.

Definition of R.S.E

“Relationships and Sexuality Education encompasses the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships, sexual identity and intimacy. Relationships and Sexuality Education seeks to provide children with opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of relationships and human sexuality, through processes which enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework”.

Aims of R.S.E.

1. To enhance the personal development, self esteem and well being of the child.
2. To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationship in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
3. To enable the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for human love and a positive attitude to relationships and sexuality.
4. Basic understanding of sexual relationships, birth and new life.

Broad objectives of R.S.E.

- Enable the child to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self. Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well being of others.
- Understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendship and in wider contexts.
- Develop an awareness and understanding of differing family patterns.
- Come to value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood.
- Develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems and implement actions in various personal social and health contexts.
- Become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity.
- Develop personal skills, which help to establish and sustain healthy, personal relationships.
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

R.S.E. in the Context of S.P.H.E.

R.S.E.

R.S.E. will be an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education as will education in Substance Use/Misuse, Nutrition and Personal Hygiene. There are two strands in the R.S.E. Curriculum and Guidelines:

- (i) Myself
- (ii) Myself and Others

Within these strands the topics are arranged in Strand Units. Under "*Myself*" the Strand Units include Self-Esteem, Taking Care of My Body, Growing & Changing, Keeping Safe and Making Decisions.

Under "*Myself & Others*" the topics are based on relationships with family, friends and other people. Of the above Strand Units two relate specifically to R.S.E:

- (i) Taking Care of my Body
- (ii) Growing and Changing.

The content within these units include what have been termed as Sexually Sensitive issues. The following is a list of issues for each class:

Infant Classes	Naming parts of the male/female body. Using appropriate anatomical terms: -Penis and vagina -womb -the term urethra explaining the physical difference between a boy and girl.
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	-the term breastfeeding can be used in discussion.
1st/2nd classes	Naming parts of the male/female body,using appropriate anatomical terms and identifying some of their functions: - penis and urethra will be taught/revised in describing the passing of urine -teacher will teach that the baby is in the womb for 9 months and may be breast of bottle-fed after birth.
3rd/4th classes	Discuss the stages and sequence of the development of the human baby in the womb. Umbilical cord and navel taught /revised. Terms:foetus,naval,umbilical cord.
5th/6th classes	Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty. Reproductive system of male/female adults. Understand sexual intercourse,conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship(6th).

In 5th class the teacher can photocopy the lessons dealing with puberty and sexual intercourse and send them home to parents thus giving them the opportunity to discuss same with their children. In 6th class,the material dealt with in 5th class will be revised. The content of the 6th class R.S.E. book is also covered. In the last term of the school year an outside speaker, Mr.Kearney will deliver the R.S.E. content over two nights. The first night will involve the parents and informing them of the R.S.E. programme. Parents and children attend on the second night.

In 5th and 6th class the sexually sensitive lessons will be taught through English. The terminology used will be in English with the teacher providing Irish terminology if they so wish.

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of R.S.E.

- Parents are acknowledged as primary educators of their children and teachers work in a supportive role.
- All content objectives will be covered by the time the children leave 6th class.
- A teacher's right to opt out from teaching the sexual sensitive issues will be honoured. Another member of staff may teach the sexually sensitive issues.

- If visitor approach is chosen by the school the parents must meet with the visitor before lessons. The visitor must follow the curriculum and the class teacher must remain in the classroom during lessons.
- A parent's right to withdraw a pupil from the process will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of the child's education themselves and must inform the school in writing as to same. Any parent who wishes to withdraw a child is asked to contact the principal.
- The school has no responsibility for information received by a child outside direct teaching.
- A letter outlining the availability of sanitary protection and sanitary bins will be sent home to all parents of 4th-6th class girls.

Informing Parents

At the beginning of each school year, parents will be informed in writing, of the lesson content to be covered in the R.S.E. programme for their child's class. Parents as primary educators may wish to discuss R.S.E. issues with their child. A week's notice will be given prior to the teaching of lessons relating specifically to sexuality education in class. Where parents choose to withdraw their child from these lessons, an arrangement will be made for the child to go to another class and undertake other schoolwork.

Dealing with Questions

Children's questions relating to content will be welcomed. Only questions and issues pertaining to lesson content will be dealt with by the teacher. At all times questions will be answered in a sensitive, factual, age appropriate manner.

Resources

- Resource material for Relationships & Sexuality Education: Junior Infants to Sixth Class (Department of Education and Science).
- 2 Primary School Curriculum Books:
 - (i) Teachers Guidelines
 - (ii) Social, Personal & Health Education.
- Anatomical Dolls-male/female
- Resource Pack for Relationships and Sexuality Education in Primary Schools(PCSP)

Ratification & Review:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Gaelscoil na Cruaiche in February 2020. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Siniú an Chathaoirligh: _____

Síniú an Phríomhoide: _____